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Cancer researchers present advances and emerging treatments

Washington, United States

Cancer researchers highlighted several treatment breakthroughs during their annual summit in Chicago that concluded Tuesday, including preliminary but encouraging data on potential benefits of weight loss medications.

Here is an overview of the latest developments from the American Society of Clinical Oncology's (ASCO) annual meeting:

- Major strides in pancreatic treatment -

Among the more than 7,000 studies presented, one on pancreatic cancer gained particular acclaim. Focused on one of the deadliest forms of cancer, the clinical trial repre-



Britain's King Charles III and Britain's Queen Camilla attend a reception at St James's Palace in London, on June 2, 2026, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Cancer Research UK.

have a potential impact on cancer.

These medications that mimic a gastrointestinal hormone (GLP-1) were originally developed to treat diabetes and may offer benefits in other areas, particularly in terms of cardiovascular health.

Many American patients suffering from obesity and diabetes use these drugs and are, due to underlying conditions, at higher risk of developing certain cancers.

Based on that premise, US researchers sought to determine whether these medications could prevent cancer from progressing from an early stage to a metastatic stage.

Their results showed a 38 to 50 percent reduction in disease progression across four types of cancer lung, breast, colorectal and liver in patients taking GLP-1 agonists compared to those taking conventional diabetes treatments.

The data is encouraging, but still requires confirmation through randomized clinical trials, said study author Mark Orland, who added "it's just the start."

- Better-targeted treatments -

Several studies that were presented focused on paring back cancer treatments.

One re-evaluated the benefit of axillary lymph node dissection, which is a surgical procedure involving the removal of armpit lymph nodes in some patients with breast cancer.

The new clinical trial showed that forgoing the surgery which carries significant side effects "is safe for patients with breast cancer that has spread" to just one or two lymph nodes.

"We are probably way over performing actually lymph node dissections, and causing long term side effects in our patients when it's unnecessary," said Julie Gralow, ASCO vice president, as she praised the findings. □

Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort Celebrates International Day of Happiness Recognition with Festive Mexican-Themed Event



Noord, Aruba – Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort recently celebrated its recognition by the Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA) as one of the winners of the Most Creative Guest Activation Celebration for International Day of Happiness 2026 with a festive Mexican-themed event for guests, team members and resort leadership.

The recognition reflects Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort's ongoing commitment to creating thoughtful, memorable guest experiences that embrace the joyful spirit of Aruba's "One Happy Island."

To mark the occasion, the resort hosted a vibrant evening filled with live mariachi entertainment, colorful décor and a lively atmosphere that brought guests and team members together in celebration. Attendees enjoyed Mexican-inspired hors d'oeuvres, handcrafted margaritas and a special treat from the ATA-loaded nacho cart by Isla Graze, which quickly became a guest favorite throughout the evening. The event served not only as a celebration of happiness, but also as a heartfelt tribute to the dedicated Amsterdam Manor team, whose passion, creativity and commitment continue to elevate the guest experience each day. Resort management joined staff



and guests throughout the festivities, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere that reflected the property's signature family spirit.

"We are incredibly proud of our team for their hard work and enthusiasm in bringing happiness to life for our guests," said the management team of Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort. "This recognition inspires us to continue creating meaningful and joyful moments that guests will cherish long after their stay."

The evening concluded with gratitude for all guests and team members who participated in the celebration and helped make the event a memorable success.

Masha danki! □

sented the first significant breakthrough against the disease in decades.

The treatment, which was developed by the American start-up Revolution Medicines, involves a new molecule named daraxonrasib.

It demonstrated significantly greater efficacy than standard chemotherapy in patients suffering from an aggressive yet common form of the disease.

Half of the patients studied survived for more than 13 months double the time observed in patients in the chemotherapy group.

"I think this represents, I would say, an unprecedented paradigm shift in how we're treating advanced pancreatic cancer," said oncologist Monty Pal.

The research kindles hope for other potential new treatments as well, as the molecule targets a protein implicated in several types of cancer.

Until recently, the protein had not responded to therapies.

- Could Ozempic impact cancer? -

Researchers presented very early but promising data that leading weight-loss medications like Ozempic and Wegovy could

Barack Obama's 'Star Wars' center touts his legacy

Chicago, United States

It's been nicknamed the "Obamalisk" and compared to a Star Wars spaceship and the Eye of Sauron from "The Lord of the Rings".

Barack Obama's \$850-million-dollar presidential center in Chicago has caused a stir even before the Democratic former president officially opens it on June 18.

Obama's is the latest, and perhaps most audacious, example of the peculiarly American genre of monuments that U.S. leaders have erected to themselves after leaving office.

Causing the most controversy is its centerpiece the near-windowless, 225-foot (69-meter) granite obelisk that houses the museum devoted to the first Black US president.

President Donald Trump no fan of either Obama or modern architecture has unflatteringly compared it to a trash can.

But the people behind the Obama Presidential Center insist that despite its brutalist appearance, the monument reflects the core messages of his 2009-2017 presidency. "It's a permanent home for hope," said Valerie Jarrett, CEO of the Obama Founda-



The Obama Presidential Center towers over Jackson Park on May 15, 2026 in Chicago, Illinois.

tion and a former top White House aide during his presidency.

The monolithic museum is the anchor for a bigger 19.6-acre site in Chicago's South Side, which has long been home to Barack and Michelle Obama.

It includes a giant basketball gym dubbed the "Home Court" as a tribute to Obama's love of shooting hoops.

There is also a sprawling playground and a public library. But unlike the other 15 official US presidential li-

braries, it will store archives digitally instead of having physical copies.

- 'Obama burger' -

Locals complained when it was announced in 2018 that the center would be built on a piece of green space, but the Obama Foundation says it is meant to be at the heart of the community.

Obama was heavily involved in the design almost too heavily at times, Jarrett said. "He's a bit of a frustrated architect, and so he had a lot to say about the way the

building was designed," she said.

The building features giant stone letters on the top spelling out part of a speech that Obama gave in 2015 in Selma, Alabama, the cradle of the civil rights movement. A slightly bigger than life-size statue of the Obamas waving welcomes guests to the museum, an AFP journalist saw during a media preview on Wednesday.

The museum itself begins with a "Hope and Change Lobby" and moves on to a colossal four-storey-high

screen showing scenes of the Obamas and the civil rights movement.

At the top is a stunning "Sky Room" with views over Chicago, where visitors can physically look through the words of Obama's speech. A restaurant sells "The Obama Burger" for \$15.50. The first floor has items from the young Obama's life, including a cast of his handprint. The second floor moves on to his 2008 US election win, while the third celebrates the achievements of his presidency.

One of the most striking exhibits is an exact replica of Obama's Oval Office, where visitors can sit behind the full-scale Resolute Desk.

The comparison between Obama's rather minimalist version and Trump's maximalist gold-accented Oval is plain, if unspoken.

- 'Inspiring' -

Trump is perhaps the elephant in the room throughout the museum.

He succeeded Obama in 2017 and has since tried to dismantle everything the Democrat did. But the "hope and change" messaging throughout the center tries to look past the last Trump-dominated decade. □

Dissing critics with humor, Hunter Biden finds social media stardom

Washington, United States

Drug use, sobriety, erections... The son of former U.S. president Joe Biden has become an unlikely social media sensation as he takes aim at critics with a mix of self-deprecating humor, biting retorts and salty language.

Hunter Biden, plagued for years with legal troubles and drug addiction, has lashed out at trolls on Elon Musk's platform X in a series of posts that have gone viral since he relaunched his old account.

Earlier this week, 56-year-old Biden marked "7 years sober" by offering gratitude to supporters of his recovery program in a short clip on the platform.

When one X user dismissed this, claiming cocaine re-

portedly discovered in the White House in 2023 "was your bag," Biden fired right back.

"It most definitely was not. I would never have forgotten my drugs," Biden joked in a retort garnering more than 18 million views.

Another X user posted an apparent digitally altered image depicting Biden with a drug pipe in his mouth.

"I know this may sound petty, but I can't stand it when people... photoshop a meth pipe in my mouth. A crack pipe doesn't have that little bowl at the end," Biden deadpanned in response.

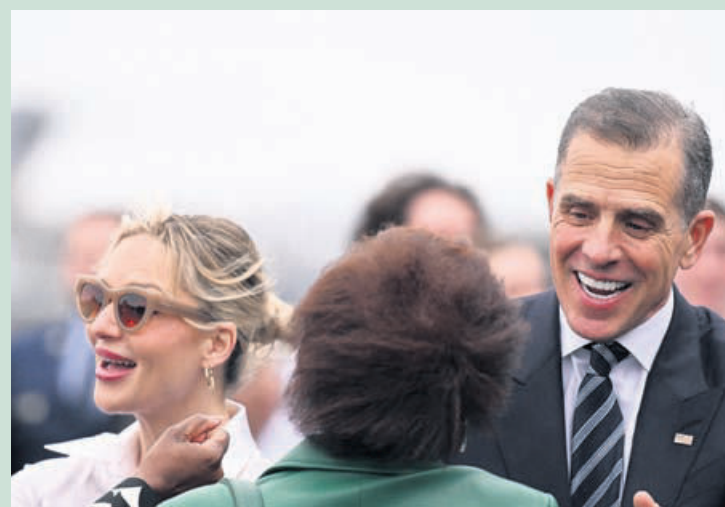
"This is why we can't trust AI. Please make the appropriate edit. Thank you for your attention to this

matter," he added, signing off in a style reminiscent of another social media sensation President Donald Trump.

In his reply to another skeptic on X, Biden wrote: "Why does everyone keep saying this? I smoked crack. I would never have wasted cocaine by putting it up my nose."

Another comment that drew widespread amusement was his remark that "I've never stolen an erection in my life" a sarcastic jibe at another online attacker whose claim about stolen elections was misspelled with an "r" instead of "l."

For years, Biden has faced bitter scrutiny from Republicans, who viewed him as his father's Achilles Heel.



Hunter Biden (R), son of U.S. President Joe Biden, and Melissa Cohen Biden (L) arrive at Joint Base Charleston in North Charleston, South Carolina, on January 19, 2025.

Hunter Biden received an unconditional pardon from Joe Biden in December 2024, after Trump defeated the Democratic election candidate, vice president Kamala Harris.

When he relaunched his X account last month, Biden junior opened with a blunt introductory post: "I'm Hunter Biden. You've never actually heard from me." □

'Backrooms' born of 'itch to explore' online horror meme

Paris, France

Bringing a horror series that went viral on YouTube to the big screen, "Backrooms" smashed box office records in its opening weekend in the US.

Ahead of the release, 20-year-old director Kane Parsons told AFP how the project developed from a creepy story that spread online about a claustrophobic, labyrinthine alternate dimension.

- When did you come across the 'Backrooms' universe? -

"It was May of 2019. I would have been 13 at the time. I do not recall the first time I saw (the original photo that inspired the stories) exactly, because it was very prevalent as a meme... I kind of saw it everywhere for a couple of weeks.

"Initially I think the thing that was speaking to me was the fact that I have certainly been in a million different spaces that resemble the backrooms and feel like the backrooms.

"The generic aspect to them is evocative of vague memories from childhood you can't quite pin down. It wasn't actually until probably a couple of years later (that)... I had the itch to try to explore that myself and



U.S. director Kane Parsons attends the LA special screening of "Backrooms" at the Aero Theatre in Santa Monica, California on May 7, 2026.

that's what I did with that first short."

- Q.: Your first video, posted in 2022, showed a young boy straying through terrifying corridors and topped 20 million views in two weeks. How did that affect you? -

"It did very well on YouTube initially, which I did not expect... within a month of that, I started getting emails from a whole bunch of different companies.

"I had no interaction with the film industry at that

point. I was 16 at the time. So it was all very new and I was very sceptical of what it could mean to try to adapt this or to be engaging with suits at all for something that I cared so personally about.

"I wanted to appreciate and be very careful with the legacy of this thing. If we're gonna go down that road, we've got to do it very specifically and very meticulously."

- Why did you make the

jump to cinema after making more than 20 short films on YouTube? -

"My whole life I've used YouTube... I've always been of the mind that there's not really a direct barrier other than a financial one, that separates a project that is online from something that is in the industrial film world. "There are reasons why internet projects are maybe not always taken seriously, but I also do think there's a lot of genuinely really great work being done by a lot of

independent creators out there.

"I'm surprised this is not a strategy being employed more, of trying to seed an IP online and test it there for cheap. That's not a bad way to go about it. Testing this thing out and seeing if it can grow organically and take root with people in a more simple form.

"It does feel like a good majority of these projects that are kind of mentioned in the same breath are all in the horror vein. That feels like the biggest launching point for independent stuff on YouTube that I've seen."

- Did you always want to be the one to direct the film? -

"There was no version of this where I wasn't the one directing that I would personally be open to. I've always been very stingy about that. "I would say the creative freedom got higher the further along the process went.

"The original script is probably the bit I had the least immediate (involvement in), I wasn't writing the thing. "From there it's been a continuous process of sculpting it in little ways and sometimes bigger ways until it's exactly the project that I would be wanting to put out.□

Designer Gabriela Hearst still believes in 'brilliance of humanity' despite AI

Montevideo, Uruguay

The "brilliance of humanity" will matter more, not less, in an AI world, Uruguayan designer Gabriela

Hearst told AFP in an interview.

Natural materials and handmade craftsmanship are the hallmarks

of Hearst's luxury brand, whose commitment to environmentally friendly fashion has secured her status as a sustainable style icon. With celebrities including Kate Middleton, Julia Roberts and former US first lady Jill Biden wearing her personal brand, Hearst was also the first Latin American woman to lead the French fashion house Chloe from 2020 to 2023.

In a world threatened by climate crisis and the emergence of artificial intelligence, "there will be a genuine need for handmade creation," Hearst told AFP during a recent trip to Montevideo to present World Cup uniforms to the Uruguayan team.

"The human part, the part of our brain that is unique to us, the part that represents the brilliance of humanity, is going to matter more and more," she said. The designer on the cusp of 50 prizes quality over quantity, and obstinately opposes fast fashion fads. "There are so many clothes in the world," she said. "There's always a way to have a small amount, but of good quality."

- 'True beauty' -

Now based in New York, Hearst said she owes her intimate knowledge of quality, sustainability and "true beauty" to her native Uruguay.

"When I was little, I want-

ed to go travel, to see the world," she said.

"After traveling," she continued, "I was able to appreciate what it means to grow up with those star-filled skies, the nature, eating food from the land, the quality, the natural luxury that surrounded me."

"Clothes were passed down" in Hearst's community, she said, recalling picking through her mother's wardrobe filled with garments made by the family seamstress.

In her native country of 3.4 million people, hundreds of weavers work for Manos del Uruguay, a network of cooperatives that produces handcrafted garments for Hearst's brand.□



Uruguayan-U.S. fashion designer Gabriela Hearst poses for a picture before the unveiling of Uruguay's national football team official suits ahead of the 2026 FIFA World Cup at the Centenario Stadium in Montevideo, on June 2, 2026.

AI unearths football talent beyond scouts' radar

Sao Paulo, Brazil

Brazilian teenager Leo Veiga had almost given up on his dream of becoming a professional footballer when artificial intelligence helped him secure a spot in the youth ranks of an Italian club.

Tech companies promising to "democratize" football are launching apps that allow young players to upload videos recorded on their phone of them showcasing their ball skills.

AI is then used to analyze and score their performance, which is sent to scouts and clubs.

The 18-year-old Veiga was stuck playing for a small club in his home state of Santa Catarina in southern Brazil when he discovered one of these apps, from Swiss company Footbao.

A YouTube video offered the highest-scoring users to train for a few days with the Italian club Lecce. Veiga was selected and caught the eye of a scout, who decided to take a chance on him.

"AI opened a new door," he told AFP from Italy, where he is now under contract with the youth academy of the club Spezia,



Julio Mariutti, senior product designer at Foot Bao, shows how the app works during an interview with AFP, in Sao Paulo, Brazil, on April 22, 2026.

which plays in Italy's second division.

"I thought, 'I'm going to download the app and give it a try. If nothing happens, it doesn't matter because nothing else is working out for me. But what if something does happen?'" he said.

Footbao works with videos from matches and training sessions, while another tech company in the field, Ger-

man firm CUJU, uses videos of drills suggested to users through the app.

- Untapped potential -

Around 120,000 players have used the Footbao app, most of them in Brazil, the world's largest exporter of football talent.

"There are probably between 14,000 and 15,000 players with the potential to join clubs or acad-

mies," chief executive Nick Rappolt told AFP.

The company, founded in 2023, also operates in Colombia and Argentina and plans to expand into other South American countries. According to Rappolt, AI can "democratize" football by helping identify talent that lies outside the radar of major development centers.

CUJU's app, meanwhile,

was launched last year and has been downloaded around 160,000 times.

"Professional clubs have huge databases, but they mostly contain players who have already been scouted. There is no reliable data on talent at the earliest stages," Sven Muller, CUJU's marketing director, told AFP.

The goal, he said, is to turn "simple videos recorded on a phone" into "reliable performance data."

Boost to women's football

In Sao Paulo, Marcela Geremias de Lima repeatedly kicks a ball against a wall, one of the exercises proposed by CUJU, which focuses on technical skills such as ball control and speed.

After using the app, Marcela was invited to youth tournaments organized by the company in front of scouts. She eventually earned a place in the Under-15 side of Corinthians, a powerhouse of South American women's football with six Copa Libertadores titles. The exercises "help you improve" and mean "you can be seen from anywhere in the world," she said. □

French pair propose new term to define 'environment'

Washington, United States

Environmental causes face an uphill battle. Overshadowed in politics, overlooked in budgets and defeated in courts, nature is often treated as a niche concern, second to more pressing matters.

Two Frenchmen — one a philosopher, the other a legal scholar — think language is part of the problem and argue that protection of the living world should be discussed in entirely different legal terms.

In their new book, Baptiste Morizot and Laurent Neyret make the case that "habitability" — the conditions that support human life on Earth — should be treated as a fundamental right like dignity and liberty.

"Habitability is the condition of all our rights and

freedoms," Morizot, a researcher at Aix-Marseille University, told AFP.

Even in France where the environment holds constitutional status, Morizot said the defense of nature as a basic right is often relegated below other core values even if people do not realize it.

"No one has said we should talk about the environment as if it were secondary," the philosopher said. But "it is marginalized; it is not in the realm of importance".

- Marginalized -

Morizot and Neyret searched for a term that elevated the environment to a fundamental condition of humanity's existence rather than a backdrop to be protected when convenient.

"This word exists. It is habit-

ability," they wrote in "Liberté, Dignité, Habitabilité", the French title of their book published in April which is yet to be translated into English.

The framework of environmental law, the authors write, dates from a time when humans did not yet have the technological capacity to drastically alter Earth's habitability or its climate.

Morizot says "the environment" has become more broadly associated with nature and "people who like flowers and little birds." "But security is more important, health is more important, growth is more important," he said of the prevailing attitude.

If judges regarded habitability in the same way as liberty then "restrictions on applying pesticides near

groundwater would no longer be seen as an arbitrary burden, but as the result of a value recognized by all", the authors wrote.

The concept "prohibits the law from continuing to speak as if the world were an unchanging environment."

'Underground movement'

Even as environmental protection has slipped down the policy priority list in the United States and Europe, climate activists have scored major courtroom wins recently from the International Court of Justice to national tribunals. □



Rag pickers look for recyclable materials at the Boragaon dumping site in Guwahati on June 5, 2024.

Show must go on for ballerinas in crisis-hit Cuba

Havana, Cuba

Cuban ballerina Laura Kamila Rojas is dancing her way through the transport woes, lengthy power cuts and economic hardship that now define daily life on the Caribbean island.

Twirling and pirouetting as a soloist with the National Ballet of Cuba (BNC), the usually shy 25-year-old transforms into a commanding performer onstage.

Rojas nabbed the coveted position a year ago, but it hasn't been easy.

The Afro-Cuban dancer is balancing a pivotal moment in her career with fuel shortages that have drastically curtailed Cuba's cultural scene, along with every other walk of life.

"It has been a bit difficult," she told AFP.

"The blackouts sometimes keep me from getting any rest, but I always do whatever I can. I get up and tell myself that I can do it, and I keep moving forward."

- 'This is what we love' -

Ballet has featured prominently in Cuban cultural life since the 1959 Revolution, which democratized access to the arts.

Overseen by the late ballet



Dancer Laura Kamila Rojas, 25, performs on stage during a performance of "Coppelia" by the National Ballet of Cuba at the Teatro Nacional de Cuba, in Havana, on May 8, 2026.

legend Alicia Alonso, the country developed its own school and proudly maintains one of the world's most prestigious companies.

Rojas has become a star of the scene and received enthusiastic accolades from the hard-to-please crowd following her role as Swanilda, the heroine of the comedic 1870 ballet "Coppelia."

"Bravo, Kamila!" the audience cried after a flaw-

less sequence of turning jumps during an April performance at Havana's National Theater.

Born in Jesus Maria, a working-class neighborhood with a strong Afro-Cuban influence, Rojas' life was imbued with song and dance from day one.

With a mother who danced in a folkloric group directed by her father, their daughter's decision to pursue pointe work over the fam-

ily tradition surprised everyone.

Now, her enduring passion has encountered countless obstacles as a result of the severe fuel shortages in U.S.-blockaded Cuba.

Every day, Rojas looks for a way to get to her dance studio, located in the Vedado neighborhood five kilometers (three miles) away from her home.

"If necessary...I'd come

on foot," said the young dancer with angel wings tattooed on her back.

Company buses are now only available on performance days due to fuel shortages.

Previous all-day rehearsals have also been scaled back to just four hours, as a way to save electricity and give the dancers time to get home.

"But the demand on us is the same," said Rojas.

"We all want to be here, because this is what we love," she added as she prepared for a practice session.

- 'Out of reality' -

A lack of sleep makes the challenging work even trickier.

At night, the use of air conditioning or even a fan to offset the intense summer heat has become impossible due to outages. Mosquitos also have to be reckoned with.

But "when I dance, I forget everything," said Rojas.

"Anything can happen, but my thing is dancing."

BNC director and prima ballerina Viengsay Valdes, 49, takes pride in this attitude that prevails across the company. □

Nigerian museum revamp brings treasures within reach

Lagos, Nigeria

Gazing at two large engraved 16th-century elephant tusks on display at Nigeria's National Museum Lagos, a guide surprised visitors by telling them: "You can touch them gently".

One of the three galleries at the museum in Nigeria's cultural and entertainment hub has been remodeled to allow visitors to interact with some artifacts, reversing the typical ban on touching exhibits, as well as take unrestricted photographs in an effort to engage younger audiences, curator Nkechi Adedeji told AFP.

As the group felt the texture of the elephant tusks to the tune of Afrobeats softly playing on overhead speakers, a young photographer was busy snapping

away, likely for a social media post.

According to Tinuke Odunfa, the interior designer of the gallery, the plan was to modernize the space and present Nigerian history in an "intentional" and "immersive" environment.

"Everything was intentional

in terms of how the space should be experienced, in terms of the colors, how the space leads you," Odunfa told AFP.

The gallery holds one of the country's most extensive collections, including major archaeological and ethnographic artifacts

such as 5th-century terracotta by indigenous Nok people.

Its white walls are lined with artifacts encased in glass, arranged chronologically from the oldest to the newest, each accompanied by brief notes.

A few other items of the permanent exhibition, "Echoes of the Past", especially those made of wood and metal, are laid out in such a way that visitors can touch and "feel them", the museum's head of exhibition Olusegun Adeleye, 51, said. Low ambient lighting casts a soft glow across the gallery, giving the space a quiet, reflective atmosphere.

Lagos, the vibrant mega city of more than 20 million people, and often described as Nigeria's melting pot, inspired Odunfa's

design.

- 'Coming in droves' -

Since the renovated gallery opened to the public in April, it has been drawing more visitors than before, Adedeji said, without giving figures.

Its Instagram-ready spaces are drawing more schoolchildren and young adults, with pictures and videos increasingly shared online, making it a popular destination among "content creators".

"They come here, do content and before you know it, it is all over the place," Adedeji said. "Youths are coming in droves now".

"I love the way the artifacts are displayed," Oyin Isioye, a 25-year-old photographer, visiting the museum for the first time, told AFP. □



Tinuke Odunfa, interior designer of the new gallery, poses for a photograph as she sits inside the National Museum in Lagos on April 23, 2026.



Attendees at Hadicurari Restaurant, Palm Beach — February 5, 2026



Roger J. Muller Jr. with Parliament Member Carlos Anthony Bermudez



Tourism Minister Wendrick Cecilia, Vasili Karalewich & Roger J. Muller Jr.

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Tourism Minister
Wendrick Cecilia
Hollywood Producer
Jim "JV" Hart
Film Producer
Stacy Frank
TV Personality
Marisol & Lelicia Tromp
SSI Divemaster
Roger J. Muller Jr. — Host

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Last updated: June 3, 2026

Aruba: The island of Aloes

ORANJESTAD – Aloe Vera, a succulent plant species, is renowned for its incredible properties for the skin. It is widely distributed and usually grows in tropical, semi-tropical and arid climates on the planet. But this plant also had a very prominent role in the history of Aruba, and its significance to the island's economy endures to this day.

The leaves of Aloe Vera contain a good amount of gel which when used topically, is great for the skin. Traditionally, Arubans use this gel to treat minor burns and other skin ailments, or

just to keep skin supple and looking bright and nourished. Aside from the gel, aloe contains a bitter, yellow substance (called aloin) which is a gentle but powerful laxative, and it is also the origin of the industry of aloe in Aruba.

Aloe vera was introduced in Aruba around 1840, when most of the island's inhabitants were farmers of little means. Dutch Governor Van Raders introduced the plant after it had been introduced in other islands of the Caribbean to cultivate and harvest the aloe to produce the laxative.

Around 1920, about two-thirds of Aruba was aloe fields, earning our island the nickname "The Island of Aloes."

Under Commander Jan Helenus Ferguson (1866-1871), aloe experienced a boom, which is why there is a road named after him, which goes through the aloe fields. In the 19th century, Aruba was the main supplier of aloin for laxative, which was imported abroad to the United States and Europe. The aloin from Aruba and Curaçao was known to be one of the best in the world and was more expensive, which meant that at the time, it had significant economic impact, particularly for the local farmers.

However, by the time the oil industry arrived on Aruba, it changed the labor market on Aruba, shifting away from agriculture. It would be after World War II that aloe



would make a comeback. And eventually, as science learned about the amazing properties of aloe gel, the industry shifted from producing laxative to producing skin care. An interesting fact is that in 1951, the production of Aruban aloe amounted to around 30 percent of the total global production!

The impact and relevance of aloe is visible all around Aruba. While most homes

will have a few plants for personal use and decoration, houses are also decorated with aloe motifs, and at some point, aloe even featured on post stamps. Around 1920, about two-thirds of Aruba was aloe fields, earning our island the nickname "The Island of Aloes." And in 1955, the aloe became a part of Aruba's coat of arms, symbolizing prosperity for the island. □

Images from the archive of the National Library of Aruba.





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Planning on snorkeling? Get to know our Picuda!



(Oranjestad)—If you're ever planning on snorkeling during your vacation on Aruba, you may spot fish that you can't recognize. One of these may be the "Picuda", a very common fish that swims all year long in the waters of Aruba. Here's some information about the beloved Picuda.

Well known is the Picuda on the island—Barracuda in English. Its scientific name is *Sphyrnaea barracuda*. It is a widely caught fish. It is found throughout the year in our waters, where it is a so-called "ambush predator" that stays still or floats in the water waiting for its prey to approach so it can attack it with lightning speed. It is well known for fishermen, especially for its white flesh in fish soup. In fish-

ing culture, there are many other names, such as Pecho blanco, Blekito, Banana, or Bleki. The names vary according to size.

Picuda can be found in our waters around our island throughout the year. Picuda, in our waters, is edible without any problem. Picuda is also a highly sought-after fish by sports fishermen or recreational fishermen because it puts up a good fight once hooked. It can be caught via trolling from a boat, casting from shore with a line or rod, or by jigging, casting the lure (artificial bait) and moving it with certain rod motions. □

Picture courtesy of the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (Santo Rosa).

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Aruban snacks and where to find them

ORANJESTAD — Want to taste something different for a change? How about some Aruban snacks that you can find all around the island? Hop in your car, and go to these locations to find some of the most popular and tasty snacks that are beloved by our locals.

One of the staples of Aruban cuisine and snacks is the Pastechi. Pastechi is a

Caribbean fried pastry that is filled with cheese, meat, chicken, veggies and sometimes even fish! Or perhaps you might want to try a croquette, locally called a "kroket," which is a crusty fried snack with typically a meat and dough mix filling. The Aruban kroket is based on its Dutch counterpart, the "bitterbal".

These two snacks are typi-

cally found in all local snack trucks, which can be found all over the island, including on the side of the main road that stretches from San Nicolas to the Hotel Area. You can also find them at local bakeries all over the island. These places may also sell other snacks and sandwiches too, perfect for on-the-road lunch break.

While you're at it, why not accompany your snack with a refreshing "batido"? Batidos are fruit shakes, typically made with added milk for some creaminess. However, you can also ask to hold the milk. Batidos are commonly found in snack shops too. You may find some batidos along the flea market downtown.

If you are looking for something a bit more fresh and healthy, why not try some coconuts, or shaved ice from local vendors? These



vendors carry their little shop at the back of their truck, so they are ever-moving around the island. However, there are a few spots where you can almost always find a coconut/shaved ice vendor:

- Right next to the Red Anchor in San Nicolas, on the way to Baby Beach.
- Along the main road next to the airport field.
- At the California Light House.

- At the Alto Vista Chapel.

These vendors may also sell other delights, like the beloved coconut-based dessert "cocada" or peanuts. All in all, in Aruba, you can always find some place to take a break and have a bite of something local, you maybe just might have to look for them! ☐

Photo credit: wheninaruba.com



Randy & Esther Fishman get the whole gang together for vacation!

(Oranjestad)—Recently we had the pleasure to meet Randy and Esther Fishman, two long-time friends of Aruba from Westfield, Indiana, who have been coming to the island for 30 years. For the first time this year, they brought their entire family with them; their two sons Scott and Matt and their families!

We hung out with Randy and Esther this week, where they told us they've been visiting Aruba since 1996. Randy admitted that he was never a believer in time-shares, but on Aruba it works because they actually use it. They've made it a tradition to visit twice a year; around Memorial Day and then

for two weeks around the holidays. They usually have either one of their sons and their families with them, as it can be difficult to get the whole gang (10 in total) together for vacation twice a year. But they're glad they finally got the chance to soak up the Aruban sun with their two boys and their grandchildren.

The family used to go to Puerto Rico for a while, but noticed over the years how the weather got worse. "Puerto Rico became like Miami. It was rain. You always could count on rain," Randy said jokingly. After being recommended to visit Aruba, they never looked back. Now, 30 years later, they still love

the Aruban weather. "You can't complain."

Over the years they made many friends on the island, and would even spend holidays and birthdays with them. "We've made the best friends here," says Esther.

Randy and Esther are already looking forward to their next visit—sometime in December this year!

Thank you to the Fishman family for loving our tiny home as much as we do! The Aruba Today team would like to give a shout out to Randy and Esther, as well as Scott, Amanda, and their two boys Leo and Simon. A shout out also goes out to Matt and Jennifer and their children Jamie and McKenzie! ☐



Keeping up with the conniving spider... Nanzi fools Cha Tiger



Many years ago, Cha* Tiger did not live in the mondi*, but among civil society. Back then, he was feared by everyone. When he walked past in a halfway, everyone around would make room immediately, that's how ferocious he was.

One night a group of friends was hanging out and they were talking about Cha Tiger. "You know, that tiger sure is incredibly strong and I don't trust him one bit. He probably eats a lot too. Oh, I'm so scared of him!" one person said.

"Oh, don't be stupid! What can Cha Tiger do? He's all bark and no bite, that's it. I certainly am not afraid of him. I bet you guys that I could even sit on his back like I would any donkey." It was Nanzi who said this. The people around him laughed at his remarks, thinking how silly it was for him to say such things.

"You, Nanzi? You are such a liar! He'll stomp you into next Tuesday, stop saying such nonsense."

"I'm not lying!" Nanzi defended himself. "He'll take me all the way to Shon Arei*."

The next morning, Shon Arei already knew of what Nanzi had been saying about Cha Tiger. He was really curious to see if Nanzi was brave enough to put his money where his mouth is. Cha Tiger walked past.

"Hey, Cha Tiger!" someone called to him. He growled at the person. "Hey, Cha Tiger! Listen!"

"Nanzi made fun of you, said he wasn't afraid of you at all! Said he could sit on your back and that you weren't as strong as we think you are."

Cha Tiger stopped dead in his tracks, furious. "Well, I'll set him straight!" Cha Tiger ran toward Nanzi's house, prepared to teach Nanzi a painful lesson. The entire way there he was growling and yelling, making everyone around aware what was going to happen. They all ran inside and peaked through the blinds to see the fight that was going to unfold.

Nanzi also heard Cha Tiger's screams, slowly getting closer and closer. He was terrified. His face turned pale, and his teeth started chattering like someone with a high fever. Sweat was dripping down his forehead.

When Cha Tiger arrived at Nanzi's place, he stormed in and saw Nanzi's frail body lying face down in the corner. "Hey, how are you, Cha Tiger?" Nanzi asked, his voice trembling. "I Heard you were making fun of me in front of your little friends, so I came to hear from your own mouth what you have to say to me," Cha Tiger

retorted, still fuming.

"Me? Talk bad about you?" Nanzi chuckled nervously. "People are such liars, I swear. Can't you see how sick I am here?" Nanzi took a pause, like someone who couldn't breathe properly. In his case of course, it was probably from extreme fear. "Shi Maria* wanted to take me to Shon Arei, where someone can heal me from my illness." Still wrapped up in his act, Nanzi turned back face down. "Me, a father of nine little children..."

Cha Tiger was shocked. Nanzi looked absolutely terrible, God knows he was dying.

"Cha Tiger, you're strong. Could you put me on your back and take me to Shon Arei, I can barely walk," Nanzi pleaded. Cha Tiger took pity on the spider and agreed to do this favor. Nanzi climbed on the tiger's back, letting his body fall down and grabbing on to Cha Tiger's neck. "Would you mind putting a rope in your mouth so I can hold on? That way I can sit up straight," Nanzi asked. Cha Tiger growled in reluctance but said OK. And so they made their way to Shon Arei.

Once they started traveling through the mondi, Nanzi turned to Cha Tiger and said: "These mosquitos are so annoying! Cha Tiger, do you mind if I cut a piece of branch so I can keep these mosquitos away?" Cha Tiger let him take his branch.

Eventually they made it out the mondi to where everyone else was. Nanzi immediately perked up and whacked Cha Tiger with his branch, making the tiger jump. He ran all the way to Shon Arei's castle. Exhausted, he plumped down in front of His Majesty.

"See, Shon Arei? Cha Tiger ain't nothing but a big donkey!" Nanzi said proudly. Everyone around cheered: "Hurray, Nanzi!" Poor Cha Tiger was so embarrassed that he was fooled by the conniving spider, and so he ran into the mondi to hide. To this day, it's said that the tiger still hides away in the mondi.

Cha: Nickname placed in front of someone's name and can mean anything, like friend. However, it often has negative connotations first.

Mondi: dry wooded areas found on the ABC islands.

Shon Arei: The King

Shi Maria: Nanzi's wife.

Story and pictures are from "Kon Nanzi a Nék Shon Arei (i otro kuentanan antiano di e araña sabi)" by Nilda Pinto. □



Cas Floria: The Decorated Houses of Aruba

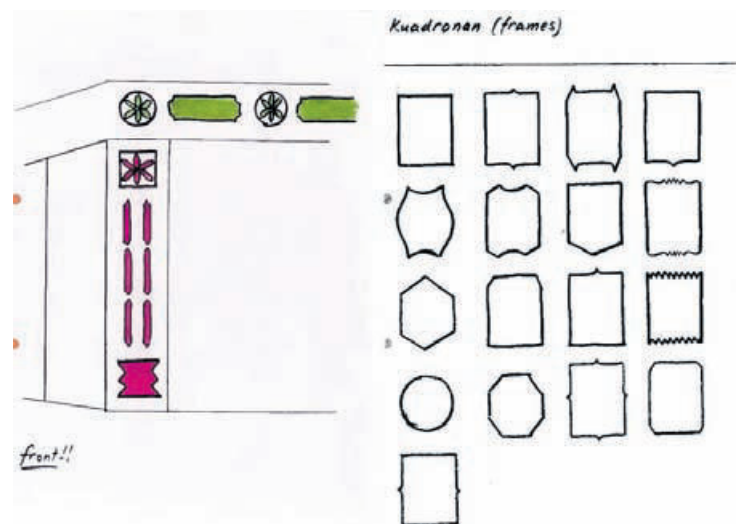
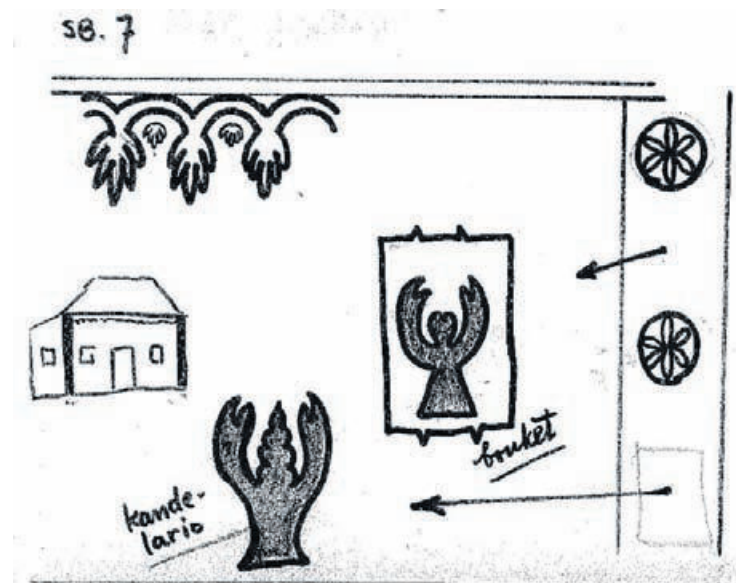
(Oranjestad)—There may be as many as 200 to 300 houses in Aruba that have beautiful decorations, including curtains, stars, flowers, half-moons, etc., placed on the corners or the upper parts of the house.

These houses can be found everywhere, in nearly every district of Aruba. People always thought that these designs came from an Indigenous culture; possibly, the star design resembled the way it was shown, similar to the "God Sun" of the Indigenous people. However, the history of this decorative system does not go very far back in time.

In his book *Millefiori di Aruba*, Father Nooyen declares that the first house to receive this type of decoration was the home of Mr. Bernardo Eman Croes in Pos Chikito. Julien (Janchi) Christiaans and Gregorio (Goy) Semeleer built this house in 1920 and created the decorations on the upper corners of the house. Other people in Pos Chikito, who saw this beautiful work, also wanted their houses decorated in the same way.

Leoncio (Joonchi) Henricus of Pos Chikito learned the work from Janchi Christiaans and, together with his son Bonifacio (Bonny) Henricus, continued decorating houses in Pos Chikito and Sabana Basora.

Janchi Christiaans, Goy Semeleer, and others from Noord, such as Hilario Christiaans, Victor Tromp, Ge-



rardo Jacobs, and Cornelis Rosa, brought the same decoration to houses in Noord and Paradera. In 1927, Janchi Christiaans built a house for Julian Tromp in Buguruy.

This was the first house in Noord to receive this type of decoration. Later, those in Paradera, Santa Cruz, and Savaneta copied the house decorations. They practiced these systems up until 1944.

Even today, the patterns are well preserved and protected, but they are no longer used.

Janchi Christiaans began cutting the patterns out of zinc plates and cardboard. He also had his own creations and systems, while Leoncio and Bonifacio Henricus produced their own fantasies. This is what made these decorations popular: many people could turn their imagination into expressive art.

However, the decoration of houses was not originally Janchi Christiaans's idea. Janchi was a disciple of his father, Hose Christiaans, and

of the Donati family, from Italian ancestors. They also made these decorations, though without using any patterns, simply designing and applying them with common plaster as the material.

Using Dr. Johan Hartog's *Aruba, Breve Historia* as reference, I noticed that he also writes that these designs are not indigenous symbols, but only decorative fantasies. One point of disagreement is that he wrote that in 1820 someone from Curaçao began this type of decoration in Aruba.

This means that, according to Father Nooyen, who declared that it began in 1920, it would have actually started 100 years earlier. As part of his research, Ito Tromp also interviewed Mr. Julio Maduro of the Department of Labor at that time, who told him that around 1880 Johannes (Janchi) Wolff began with house decorations. And as Janchi himself said, he learned this from his grandfather, who in earlier times had built the first lighthouse at California Point.

After comparing his information, Ito Tromp wrote that Hartog was right concerning the period when decorated houses began in Aruba in 1820. However, it was not people from Curaçao who started it. Victor Tromp, who was 87 years old at the time of writing, was a member of Janchi Wolff's family.

Julio Maduro said that in 1920 they began again with this type of decoration. In general, there is no specific year (up to now) when Arubans first began with this

decorative artistic expression. It is interesting to know that these decorations are a kind of symbol for several generations.

For example: Decorations that appear on the house of the Arends family could also be seen on the houses of the Bermudez or Croes families. This was because parents always gave a specific sign to their sons or daughters when they were getting married.

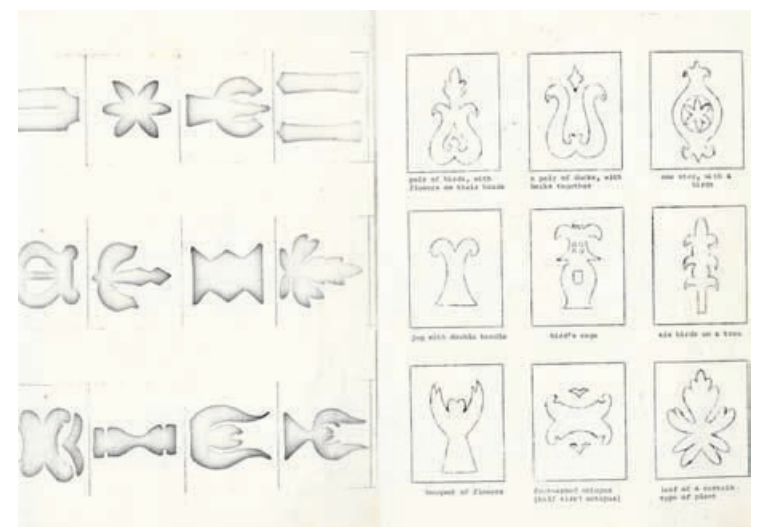
It was also said that these designs had a certain kind of voodoo purpose, to keep away the spirits of the Indigenous people who were buried in the neighborhoods where the houses now stand. However, this has almost completely disappeared.

As for the continuation of these designs from family to family, this is a cultural heritage that is no longer established. For this reason, in earlier times, every young man who married had to have his own house; otherwise, there would be no marriage.

The designs were created according to the individual's imagination. If he saw, for example, six pairs of birds on a tree, he would then paint six pairs of birds on a tree. If he wanted to express his love for his twin children, then he designed a twin.

Nowadays, if you want to use these designs for your house, don't worry—you can simply copy them and paint them.

Source: E casnan Decora na Aruba (1976) by Ito Tromp. Picture credit: Stichting Monumentenfonds & Caribiana.



CROSSWORD

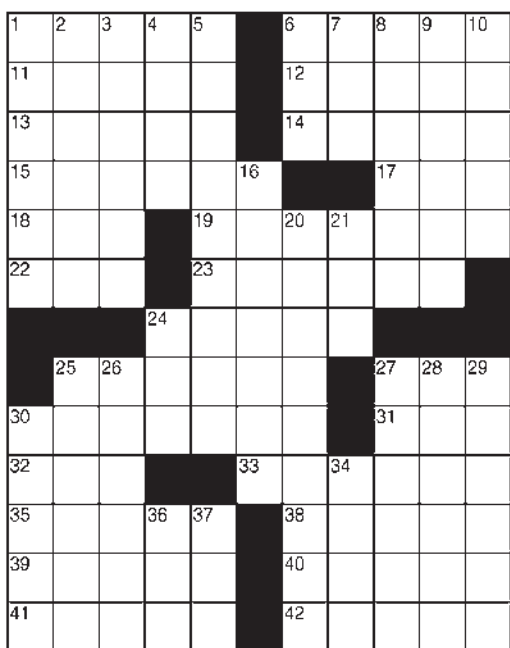
By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 1 "Beat it!" girl, often
6 Stylishly uninhibited
11 Eucalyptus eater
12 "Hello" singer
13 "As You Like It" forest
14 Craze
15 Sword-making city
17 Harris and O'Neill
18 Hydro-carbon suffix
19 Ex-GI
22 Bright beam
23 Pageant toppers
24 Zodiac dozen
25 Senator Sanders
27 Gold unit
30 City of northern Italy
31 Gorilla, for one
32 Imitating
33 Lenin's successor
35 Missteps
38 Key
39 Fork features

DOWN

- 40 Flower
41 Bring to bear
42 Like some communities
1 Axel performer
2 Solar halo
3 Boo — ("To Kill a Mockingbird" recluse)
4 Out of the wind
5 Making decrees
6 Toast spread
7 Writer Tarbell
8 Swiss city
9 Moves smoothly
10 Brewing need
16 Starts
20 Like some tigers
21 Cal. spans
24 Hit letters
25 Bungle
26 Galahad's mother
27 Pavlova's field
28 Individually
29 Signed a lease
30 Treat, as a turkey
34 Seoul setting
36 For each
37 Retired jet



2-4

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

2-4 CRYPTOQUOTE

Q T Z B P O O J T W D L ' H R B

Q B Z V J T Q ... V D U Q B Z V J T Q. D L X

X J L ' H W D P P U B Q E V Z P B O.

— "D V Z K P D L B!"

Cryptoquote: I HAVE BEEN, AND ALWAYS SHALL BE, YOUR FRIEND. LIVE LONG AND PROSPER. — "STAR TREK II: THE WRATH OF KHAN"



Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic—but important—information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the



Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

JUNE CRUISE SHIP SCHEDULE	
02 TUE	GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: B CARNIVAL MAGIC Arrival: 9:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: C
09 TUE	CARNIVAL HORIZON Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C CARNIVAL MARDI GRAS Arrival: 13:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: I
16 TUE	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: B GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C SEVEN SEAS MARINER Arrival: 10:00 Departure: 21:00 Berth: I
17 WED	CARNIVAL VISTA Arrival: 7:00 Departure: 16:00 Berth: C ALLURE OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: I
23 THU	CARNIVAL HORIZON Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: B GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: C
30 TUE	GRANDEUR OF THE SEAS Arrival: 8:00 Departure: 23:00 Berth: B CARNIVAL MAGIC Arrival: 9:00 Departure: 22:00 Berth: C

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku



Difficulty: ★★★★★

6/5

Answer to previous puzzle

7	4	3	8	1	9	6	5	2
2	6	8	3	5	7	1	4	9
1	9	5	4	6	2	7	3	8
6	8	4	1	7	5	9	2	3
9	7	2	6	8	3	5	1	4
3	5	1	2	9	4	8	7	6
4	1	9	5	2	8	3	6	7
5	3	7	9	4	6	2	8	1
8	2	6	7	3	1	4	9	5

Difficulty: ★★★

6/4

Vast astronaut mission kicks off commercial race to replace ISS

Paris, France

The race to replace the ageing International Space Station is heating up after US company Vast announced a mission to fly an astronaut to its planned Haven-1 station next year. If the repeatedly delayed Haven-1 is launched into orbit as scheduled in early 2027, it will become history's first commercial space station, beating out several competitors.

It would also mark a post-ISS era for humanity's presence in space, as the West seeks independence from Russian space operations due to the war in Ukraine. After a quarter of a century being continuously inhabited, the ISS is scheduled to be deorbited in 2030. On Tuesday, Vast became the first aerospace company to announce a crewed mission to its future station. This is an important milestone in a new era in crewed spaceflight that is less expensive -- and less reliant on Russia, Vast CEO Max Haot told AFP in an interview.

- 'Attractive prices' -

French astronaut Arnaud Prost "is joining us on the crew of the inaugural mission of what will be the world's first operational commercial space station when it launches next year", Haot said. On board Haven-1, Prost will be tasked with carrying out tests ahead of scientific experiments, which will be similar to those conducted on the ISS, he explained. The privately funded station will have a single module, compared to 16 currently on the ISS.

During its three years in orbit, it will "host four two-week missions," Haot said.



This still image from a NASA livestream shows Crew-12 answering questions during a livestream aboard the International Space Station (ISS) on February 14, 2026.

Vast has bigger plans for its replacement. Haven-2 will eventually have nine modules, but the company plans to deploy them gradually over time. This will mean the modules cost "five to 10 times lower" than those for the ISS, which often exceeded a billion dollars, Haot said. "This will allow us to increase the number of crewed flights and offer more attractive prices to our customers," he added.

"We hope to launch three modules per year for our future station and that at least one module will be launched by a European rocket." The company aims to have

four modules in space by 2030, which would support six-month missions on board. Other U.S. aerospace companies also have plans to launch commercial space stations, including Axiom Space and Amazon billionaire Jeff Bezos's Blue Origin. The California-based Vast, which was founded in 2021 by cryptocurrency billionaire Jed McCaleb, acknowledges it entered the race late. But the company now claims to be two years ahead of its rivals, citing contracts with NASA.

- European HQ -

Also on Tuesday, Vast announced a mission to send French astronaut Thomas

Pesquet to the ISS next year. The company also plans to open its European headquarters in Paris. For both new missions, Vast will use SpaceX's Falcon 9 rockets and Dragon 2 capsule to get the astronauts into space. □



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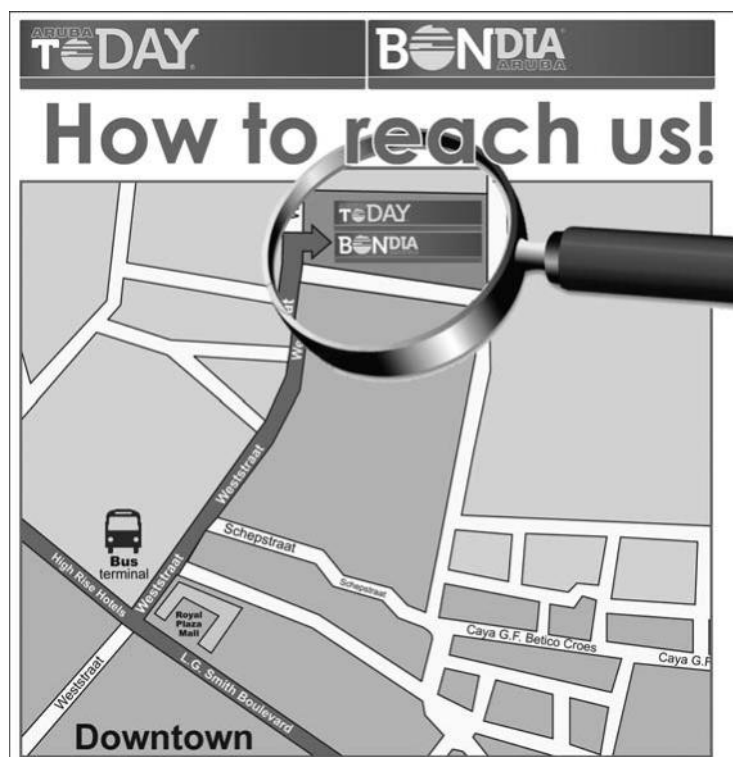
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Red Cross	582 2219

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Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
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FAVI- Visually Impaired
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Tel. 736 2952
Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989
Against Domestic Violence(FCVR)
Tel. 583 5400
Centre for Diabetes
Tel. 524 8888
Child Abuse Prevention
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Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS



A photo taken on May 7, 2026 shows the letters AI for Artificial Intelligence on a laptop screen (top) next to the logo of the Microsoft's Copilot chatbot application on a smartphone screen in Frankfurt am Main, western Germany.

Microsoft unveils AI models in push for independence from OpenAI

San Francisco, United States

Microsoft on Tuesday unveiled its own cutting-edge artificial intelligence models in San Francisco a crucial step toward reducing its dependence on OpenAI, the creator of ChatGPT.

Microsoft, the first company to have invested massively in OpenAI, has for several years been seeking to reduce its reliance on its Sam Altman-led partner.

It renegotiated their alliance last year and retains only a non-exclusive license on its technology until 2032. But Microsoft chief Satya Nadella has been saying it for years: he refuses to end up like IBM, the computing giant that backed the rise of Microsoft before being supplanted by the upstart company in the 1980s.

"It's important that we are self-sustaining and are not taking huge dependencies, as this is a very fast-moving, highly fluctuating environment," Sophie Lebrecht, who joined the group's AI team in March, said during a press visit to its Silicon Valley campus.

At its annual developer conference, Microsoft Build, the group unveiled MAI-Thinking-1, its first "reasoning" model AI systems that break down problems

step-by-step before responding, similar to offerings from OpenAI, Google or Anthropic.

Microsoft says it built the model "from scratch" with "no distillation" of rival models a common shortcut that involves copying a competitor's outputs to train a new system more cheaply and quickly.

The tool, still limited to a select group of customers, arrives roughly a year and a half behind pioneers such as OpenAI and Google.

Microsoft also unveiled other in-house models for generating images, transcribing audio, creating synthetic voices and coding.

Joining the broader Silicon Valley craze, the group aims to ride the wave of so-called "agentic" AI, which has moved the technology beyond a simple chatbot to one that acts on your behalf.

- From 'virus' to feature -

It unveiled Microsoft Scout, an "always-on" assistant for preparing meetings, managing schedules and drafting emails based on OpenClaw, the open-source software whose global popularity launched this wave in late 2025.

Nadella at the time called it "a virus," with Silicon Valley alarmed by online secu-

rity incidents triggered by the autonomous agents.

Less than a year later, OpenClaw's Austrian creator, Peter Steinberger, took the Microsoft stage on Tuesday to applause from executives and developers.

Scout is available only to a limited circle of customers. Last month, Google unveiled its own autonomous agent, Gemini Spark, reserved for its premium US subscribers.

Microsoft also announced a Nvidia-powered mini-PC, the Surface RTX Spark Dev Box, capable of running AI models offline, as well as an AI platform dedicated to scientific research.

For bringing AI into the home, Microsoft unveiled its hardware bet: an ecosystem of Android-based devices designed to interact by voice with AI agents, without opening applications as on a computer or smartphone.

On stage, the company showed two prototypes: a desk speaker with a screen that recognizes you by face, displays your tasks for the day and can double as a computer once plugged into a monitor; and a wearable badge for conversing with your AI agent, developed with Qualcomm. □



British computer scientist Tim Berners-Lee poses for photos during an interview with AFP in central London on June 3, 2026, on the sidelines of the SXSW London 2026 festival.

Tim Berners-Lee calls for AI to preserve 'original values' of web

London, United Kingdom

World Wide Web pioneer Tim Berners-Lee says he wants to see artificial intelligence preserve "the original values" of his invention while allowing users to filter personal data sent to tech giants.

The primacy "of the person, of the individual" was at the heart of the internet and should apply to AI too, he told AFP Wednesday in an interview on the sidelines of the SXSW tech festival in London.

The British physicist-turned-computer scientist conceived the web in 1989 while working at CERN, the European particle physics lab in Switzerland.

Berners-Lee hailed AI as an "exciting" development -- but one that would benefit from being regulated.

AI models "use the fact that the web has got so much data on it to be trained", he said.

"It's important that people use this technology to make sure that their customers, their citizens, have got control over their own data," he said.

Berners-Lee said that AI does not have anything like the World Wide Web Consortium, the international internet standards organisation he founded.

As a result, AI pioneers have not been able to "benefit from the collaboration that they would get if they did have something like that".

- Web free for all -

Berners-Lee originally proposed his world-changing invention as a way for scientists around the world to share information about their research.

He named this new network the World Wide Web (WWW), joining forces with Belgian Robert Cailliau in 1990 to develop it.

The web was based on two pillars: the HTML language that allows the creation of a website, and the HTTP hypertext system that lets the user request and then receive a web page. Determined to make the web freely available to everyone, he did not patent his programme, ensuring it took off and spread rapidly.

With the use of personal data by AI models preoccupying authorities, particularly in Europe, Berners-Lee has made data protection his main cause in recent years, notably through the startup Inrupt.

"Without data, (AI models) can't exist. And they've had unfettered access to everybody's data now, and if we don't watch it, we're going to get to a really bad spot," warned the company's co-founder John Bruce. Launched in 2018, Inrupt relies on secure data wallets that remain in the hands of users. □

Favorites keep apart in lead up to Tour de France

Paris, France

The Tour de France promises perhaps one of the greatest yellow jersey battles in recent memory when it begins in one month's time.

Four-time champion Tadej Pogacar will be aiming for a record-equalling fifth success but he is likely to face stiff competition from a rejuvenated two-time former winner Jonas Vingegaard and teenage prodigy Paul Seixas.

But with all three opting for a very different pre-Tour build-up, cycling fans will have to wait until the Grand Boucle itself to watch the favorites go head-to-head in a stage race.

It is a curious feature this season, in which cycling's best stage racers have largely managed to avoid each other.

In fact, Pogacar, 27, and Vingegaard winners of the last six Tour de France editions between them have only faced each other once since last year's race, at the one-day European Championships in October. Having just won the Giro d'Italia, Vingegaard whose only other two events this year were the week-long Paris-Nice and Tour of Catalonia stage races will not race again before the Tour. "We think we're on a



Team Visma Lease a Bike Danish rider Jonas Vingegaard wearing the overall leader's pink jersey celebrates as he crossing the finish line to win in the 20th stage of the Giro d'Italia 2026 - Tour of Italy cycling race between Gemona del Friuli and Piancavallo, Italy, on May 30, 2026.

good track for the Tour," Vingegaard said during the Giro.

"I think I also somehow evolved or took a bit of a step here during the Giro. That was the whole plan, then to try to take another step after the Giro," the 29-year-old added with the Tour starting on July 4 in Barcelona.

Pogacar has opted to warm up for the Tour at the week-long tours of Romandie, which he won last month, and Switzerland,

which begins in two weeks' time.

His other five races this year were all one-day spring classics.

Frenchman Seixas, for his part, is heading to the Criterium du Dauphine, now known as the Tour of Auvergne-Rhone-Alpes.

He has at least raced Pogacar twice this year, finishing second to the Slovenian great at two one-day races: Strade Bianche in March and Liege-Bastogne-Liege a month later. It's a far cry from last

year when Pogacar, Vingegaard and German Florian Lipowitz finished in the top three spots at the Dauphine in June and then repeated the feat a month later at the Tour.

Seixas was also at the Dauphine last year, finishing eighth.

- Keeping control -

While the plethora of top-level cycling races does allow for the sport's best to avoid each other, it remains a rare phenomenon. Pogacar and Vingegaard

have usually faced each other in at least one stage race ahead of the Tour.

In 2021, Vingegaard was second to Primož Roglič who was himself a Tour contender in those days at the Tour of the Basque Country with Pogacar third. Pogacar beat Vingegaard into second place at Tirreno-Adriatico in 2022 and a year later won Paris-Nice with his Danish rival third.

The lack of pre-Tour clashes between top riders does not stop at the three favourites. Lipowitz has opted to ride the low-key Tour of Slovenia as his warm-up event, while Remco Evenepoel, who was third in 2024, has decided to skip all the traditional pre-Tour races.

His last race was Liege-Bastogne-Liege at the end of April, meaning he will have spent 68 days without competing when he starts the Tour.

"We want to keep control of the workload, the stimulus, the progress and the process," Evenepoel's sporting director at Red Bull-Bora Hansgrohe, Patxi Vila, told Belgian newspaper La Dernière Heure.

It is not a total wash out ahead of the Tour when it comes to top riders coming face-to-face in major races, though. □

Brunson vows no let up after Knicks comeback sinks Spurs

San Antonio, United States

Jalen Brunson fueled another New York comeback triumph on Wednesday but said the Knicks can't afford to relax after pulling off a 105-95 victory over the San Antonio Spurs in game one of the NBA Finals.

Brunson scored 13 of his 30 points in the fourth quarter as the Knicks rallied from a 14-point deficit to post their 12th straight victory after sweeping the Philadelphia 76ers and Cleveland Cavaliers in the Eastern Conference semi-finals and finals. It was the seventh double-digit comeback in the second half of a playoff game by the Knicks over the last two postseasons and their fourth of these playoffs.

That includes their rally from 22 points down with less than eight minutes remaining in their opener against Cleveland.

"I think we know what we have to do," Brunson said of the Knicks' ability to dig in when they're down. "I think we're a pretty together group and still just continue to fight and have each others' back and just know that we're going to keep chipping away, chipping away."

"It's a credit to the mentality we have as a team," he said.

Teammate Karl-Anthony Towns said it's a mentality that reflects New York City. "It's something that's in the city," Towns said. "You

feel that energy in the city the grit, the grind, the hard work you've got to put in to make it in the city."

"I think we reflect all our fans and their lifestyles and what it takes to make it in New York City when we step on that court in a Knicks jersey."

The Knicks, chasing their first title since 1973, are in the Finals for the first time since they fell to San Antonio in 1999.

While they managed to snatch a key road win, Brunson said he expects a young Spurs team led by French star Victor Wembanyama to hit back hard. "They come ready to play more than any other team we've faced," he said.

"We have the utmost respect for them. We know that we've got to be ready for game two."

"We can't just be satisfied," he added after the

Knicks leaned on defense to pull out the victory despite a lackluster offensive showing. "We have a lot of things we can do to be better." □



Jalen Brunson #11 of the New York Knicks looks on during the fourth quarter against the San Antonio Spurs in Game One of the 2026 NBA Finals at Frost Bank Center on June 03, 2026 in San Antonio, Texas.



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Qualifier Chwalinska sets up Andreeva French Open final clash

Paris, France

Maja Chwalinska made French Open history on Thursday as the world number 114 became the first qualifier in the professional era to reach the Roland Garros final, where she will take on Mirra Andreeva. The Pole downed Diana Shnaider 7-6 (7/4), 6-4 in the last four to join Russian 19-year-old Andreeva, a straight-sets winner over Marta Kostyuk, in Saturday's title-decider.

Should she best Andreeva in the final, Chwalinska will become just the second woman to come through qualifying and win a Grand Slam final in any major since the Open era began, after Emma Raducanu's title run at the US Open in 2021.

The 24-year-old said her run in the French capital was "like a dream", moments after beating 25th

seed Shnaider, who a day before eliminated world number one Aryna Sabalenka.

"I don't know what's going on, I just, I dunno what to say. I'm sorry, I'm just very happy," she added to raucous applause on Court Philippe Chatrier.

Chwalinska, appearing in her first main draw in Paris,

has won nine matches across a three-week campaign at Roland Garros that started with three rounds of qualifying last month.

She admitted that her physical state was "not great" in the aftermath of her two-hour-10-minute semi-final win.

"I mean it's so challenging to play against the best players in the world day by day, but it's a Grand Slam so you just have to give your best day by day," she added.

"But I'm not complaining at all!" Chwalinska had only won one match in her two previous Grand Slam ap-

pearances, at Wimbledon in 2022, and only just two tour-level matches on clay before Roland Garros.

En route to the last four, Chwalinska started out by downing Olympic gold medallist Zheng Qinwen in the first round before felling 23rd seed Elise Mertens, former world number three Maria Sakkari, hometown hope Diane Parry and 22nd seed Anna Kalinskaya.

Chwalinska is projected to climb to at least a career-high No. 21 in the rankings. After edging the first set on a tie-break, the second frame was level until Shnaider requested a medical time-out for a back massage. After that stoppage, at 4-3, Chwalinska won the next three games to claim victory. "Very proud of myself, what I achieved here," Shnaider said of her best performance so far in a Grand Slam. □



Poland's Maja Chwalinska reacts to her victory at the end of her women's semi final singles match against Russia's Diana Shnaider on day 12 of the French Open tennis tournament on Court Philippe-Chatrier at the Roland-Garros Complex in Paris on June 4, 2026.